

**COMMISSION ON AGING
MINUTES
SEPTEMBER 16, 2020**

Attending: Steven Katz, Presiding; C. Burns; Kip Burgweger; James Dougherty; Ann Marie Hynes; Ellen Wolfson
Staff: Lori Contadino; Laurette Helmrich.
Guest: Christine Edwards

Call To
Order: The meeting was called to order at 8:30 a.m. The meeting was held by Zoom.

Minutes: Minutes of the July meeting were not distributed prior to the meeting. Approval of the July Minutes was tabled to the October meeting.

Chair's
Report: S. Katz reported that the Strategic Plan work is ongoing.

Dept. Of
Human
Services: E. Wolfson reported that a new Director is in place. The Department remains at 26% under budget even though rental assistance is up due to COVID.

Nathaniel
Witherell: E. Wolfson reported that there have been no new COVID cases for over a month allowing for reduced staff testing. 25% of the staff now gets tested each week so that over the month all staff are tested. The board will be voting on a proposal to allow a cell tower to be placed on the property. Visitors are still under restrictions. They are seeing reduced admissions especially post surgery rehab admissions. This has been a nationwide trend under COVID.

Commission
Directors
Report:

VIRTUAL HEALTH INSURANCE COUNSELING

Working strategy:

1. All counseling will be done virtually via telephone, FaceTime or Zoom
2. Clients will be required to create personal accounts on MyMedicare.gov
3. Online Client Consent and Fillable Forms will help streamline the process
Verbal signature accepted on client consent
Fillable form to request appointment
Fillable form for internal use only which directly mirrors the State Client Beneficiary Contact Form that all counselors must complete.
4. Volunteer Counselors have the choice of coming to the Center or staying home to conduct their sessions. With the facility closed to the public, we have ample space to accommodate Counselors while adhering to all safety protocols. This will enable use of our computers, printers and the ability to provide technical support if questions should arise.
5. Two webinars on our CONNECT program aired live on Channel 79 "Getting Ready for Medicare Open Enrollment" - The second session is scheduled for Friday, September 18th at 11:30 a.m.
6. Volunteer Counselors must sign a waiver in order to conduct sessions on

site.

7. SWCAA providing supportive resources - plexi-glass shields; masks, gloves and wipes for use

8. Administration of Community Living just released a virtual strategy for Open Enrollment which we are in the process of reviewing. All strides taken by our Team are in direct alignment with the process outlined by the ACL.

GROCERY ASSISTANCE

The Commission on Aging has been exploring the feasibility of enhancing food security among older adults with limited access to groceries. In cooperation with Neighbor to Neighbor, a grocery bag of essential items (milk, bread, eggs, produce, beans, soup, cereal, protein source (peanut butter, canned tuna or chicken, etc.) can be made available to residents 60+ for a cost of \$15. The COA will be meeting with JFS, Meals on Wheels, CCI, Department of Human Services etc... to ensure there is no duplication of service and to determine if this offering would lend assistance and support to residents of our community.

SWCAA AFFINITY GROUPS

Affinity Groups continue to meet every Wednesday at 3:00 p.m. via Zoom and are now focused on:

1. Reopening Senior Centers Group: All but 2 Centers within the SW region remain closed. We reevaluate this on a monthly basis.

2. Low-Tech/No-Tech User Group: New mailing of "299 To You" to just under 1000 households of brain engaging activities and information about Medicare Open Enrollment, Oktoberfest and Halloween Drive thru events. Residents are asked to let us know if they want to receive future editions.

3. Medicare D Open Enrollment Group: Working collectively to develop strategies for Health Insurance Counseling. SWCAA providing each community with plexiglass dividers, masks, wipes and gloves.

STRATEGIC PLANNING COMMITTEE

Strategic Planning Committee is now meeting weekly. The team completed a SWOT analysis and developed priorities for the Senior Center, Commission on Aging for the next 3 years. A draft will be prepared, refined and presented to the Board once complete. The creation of the new strategic plan is in direct alignment with the budget process.

Senior
Center:

L. Helmrich reported on the following:

Outdoor Programs We have 3 outdoor programs taking place: Art, Tai Chi and Walk the Distance

Credit Card Update - We needed to order new device as the previously purchased devices are outdated. Laurette meeting with representative today

Teddy's Ready Drive Thru - Next drive through lunch will take place on Friday September 23, 2020. 100 participants expected

299 to You - First mailing to go out at end of month. Packet will contain brain games that don't require technology

Civic Center Programs - Two Trivia type programs planned for November - 1 at EGCC and 1 at WCCC. 25-member limit with social distancing. Registration

required

Senior Tax

Relief: K. Burgweger reported that there was no report but he did mention that he, Ann Marie Hynes and Ellen Wolfson were all interviewed and approved for a new term by RTM Committees.

Age Friendly

Greenwich: S. Katz reported that work continues on the action plan but that COVID has slowed down overall progress.

Next Meeting: The next meeting of the Commission will be at 8:30 on October 21, 2020

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned by unanimous motion at 9:15 a.m.

Respectfully submitted,

James B. Dougherty
Secretary